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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum



THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM

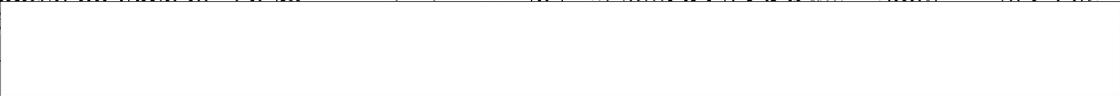
Information as of 0600  
3 March 1965

PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL



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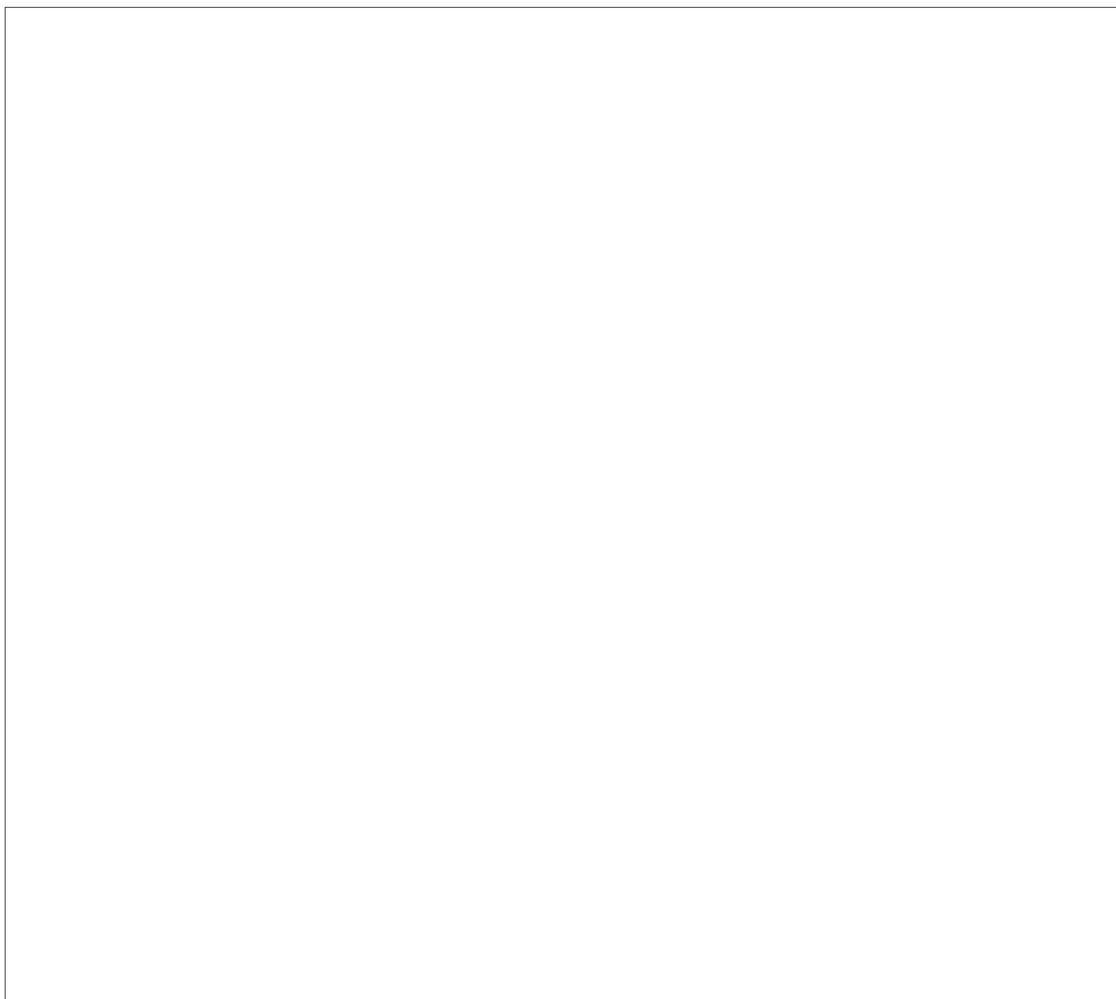


CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Office of Current Intelligence  
3 March 1965

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam as of 0600 EST

Communist Military Developments

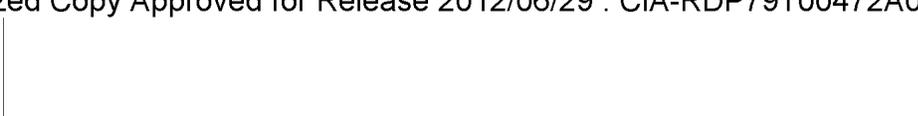


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5. No significant Chinese Communist or North Vietnamese military deployments have been noted in the past 24 hours.



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US Military Actions in North Vietnam

6. Initial photointerpretation of the US strike on Xom Bang has confirmed extensive damage to the target area. Although pilots claimed 70-80 per cent damage on Quang Khe--the South Vietnamese target--follow-up photoreconnaissance was unable to confirm this because of the plane's low altitude and distance from the target. New photo coverage of this target has been ordered.



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8. US losses in the strike are now reported at six planes; five pilots have been successfully recovered or are in friendly hands and most are in good condition. Search and rescue operations for the sixth pilot--hampered by weather--were to continue today.

Communist Political Developments

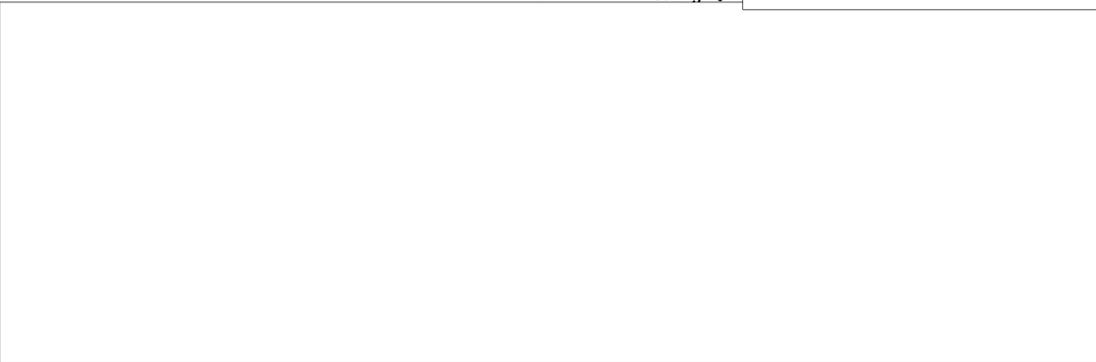
9. Communist bloc reaction to the strikes has thus far been limited. Initial commentary by Hanoi and Moscow has been in familiar veins, and does not initiate any new threats or themes. The North Vietnamese are now claiming to have downed nine aircraft. Initial bloc propaganda reaction following the February air strikes was also largely reportorial in nature; extensive substantive commentary was not noted for some 24 hours.

10. Peiping gave the strikes top front-page coverage in its press on 3 March, but has thus far issued no authoritative commentary.

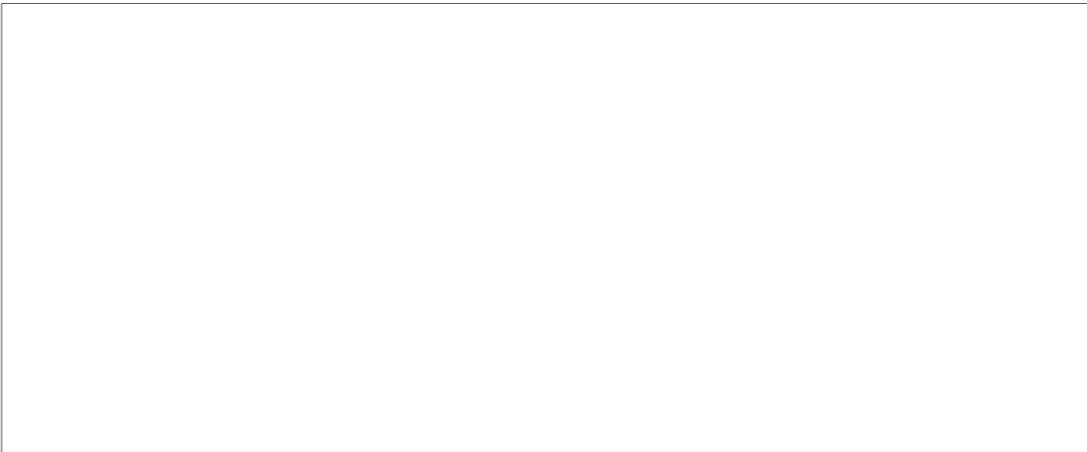


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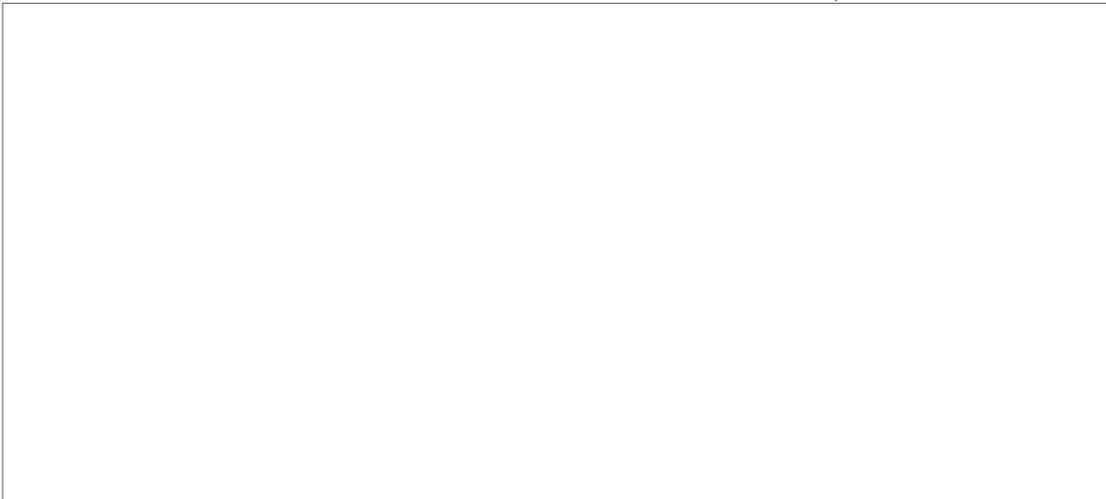
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Political Activity in South Vietnam

13. Buddhist leader Tri Quang told a US Embassy officer last weekend that air strikes against North Vietnam should be continued as part of a broad diplomatic and military offensive against the Communists, and should not be limited to retaliation for attacks on Americans. Quang, who said he was not in a position to express such views publicly, also urged stepped-up attacks against Viet Cong bases inside South Vietnam. Two Buddhist laymen close to Quang voiced similar views in separate conversations.



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15. In discussions yesterday with General Westmoreland concerning the composition, mission, deployment, and mutual relationship with the US marine battalions being sent to Da Nang, both Acting Commander-in-Chief General Minh and Defense Minister General Thieu expressed concern over the reaction of the Vietnamese civilian population.

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They requested that the marine forces be brought in as inconspicuously as possible to avoid civilian demonstrations along the lines of recent calls for a peaceful settlement.

Viet Cong Military Activity

16. The military situation in South Vietnam shows no marked change or significant Viet Cong military actions.



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